

Effective Use of Data

Turnaround Principle #6

The focus of this article for this month is [Turnaround Principle 6 –Effective Use of Data](#). Turnaround Principles are not only used as a strategic system to support schools that may be struggling, but more importantly the eight principles are indicators for high performing schools. When discussing [Turnaround Principle 6](#) using data effectively can positively impact student achievement. A cyclical process of reviewing data creates data driven dialogue with instructionally relevant questions that help determine the principles of learning, response to intervention, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Data for Climate and Culture

Collecting and analyzing multiple points of data surrounding the school's climate and culture can illuminate additional opportunities for improvement. Schools can review attendance, tardies, behavior/discipline, and survey data during this process. Monitoring school attendance and tardies can have an effect on student achievement. Students are not able to learn if they are not in school. It is essential that schools proactively begin to identify students with attendance issues and work with the student and family to reduce the barriers preventing the student from being at school each day and on time. It is also an effective practice to review behavior data and set up interventions for the most frequently referred and/or suspended students with the goal in mind of reducing their time out of the classroom where a student learns best. Trends in behavior data may reveal the need for support for the staff in professional development in the area of behavior management. Survey data from all stake holder groups should also be used to monitor the climate and culture. Use the data from the surveys to develop a plan for improvement with the school leadership team and community representatives.

Data for Student Achievement

For sustained school improvement it is essential that all staff members are familiar with student data and use it to drive instructional decisions. Staff should have easy access to the data management system. When embedded into the culture of the school, this system should allow for a systematic collection and analysis of a range of student data. Teachers should effectively utilize the data regularly to determine instructional strategies, student groupings, and targeted interventions. By setting up clear and effective protocols that guide the use of data, staff members will know how to review disaggregated data to track and monitor the progress of all students. This will help in monitoring the implementation of strategies and striving to meet the goals established in the School Improvement Plan.

Analysis Process

An established specific schedule, process, and protocol for analyzing on-going formative assessment data are extremely important to ensure improvement. Collaboration time with an expectation of analyzing formative assessment data during this time should be embedded into a school's schedule. The principal should have a way to monitor the effectiveness of this collaboration time. The outcome of the collaboration is a developed plan of how the areas of weaknesses will be addressed in instruction and lesson planning. All if these data sources should also direct professional development opportunities towards instructional needs rather than teacher interest, ensuring that the professional development is geared toward the School Improvement Goals versus being disconnected and random. During daily, frequent walk-throughs, principals should be focused on verifying that agreed upon practices and improvements are implemented with quality. Teachers should understand that principals will be verifying the implementation of professional development initiatives in their teaching.

